

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - June 9, 2006
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PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

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Wind power is turned on at Maalaea

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - June 8, 2006

A mighty wind blows across Maalaea Ridge on the southern coast of West Maui, and now that wind generates power for [Maui Electric Co.](#)

Construction team members and corporate partners gathered there Thursday to mark completion of a project to build a 30-megawatt wind power farm.

[Kaheawa Wind Power](#), the company that built the facility, is now partially online and supplying electricity to Maui Electric.

"This is one of the most ambitious projects I have ever worked on," said Kaheawa Wind Power Vice President Mike Gresham. "Building a wind farm is difficult enough, but building it on a steep mountain on an island in the middle of the Pacific presents even more challenges."

Gresham said the company had to ship the very large turbine components and construction equipment to Maui from all over the globe, build an access road and then haul the components up a mountain with an average slope of 15 percent, and finally assemble the towers in winds that frequently exceed 35 miles per hour.

"Let's just say I've had a few sleepless nights," he said.

The wind power farm will generate, on average, 9 percent of Maui's electricity, enough to supply 11,000 households, eliminating the use of 244,000 equivalent barrels of oil annually.

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